

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OPIC-03 SAM-01 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-05 SAJ-01 /061 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2211

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1643

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: PORTUGUESE LIBERATION ARMY

1. IN SPECIAL TV AND RADIO BROADCAST SUNDAY EVENING MAR 23 IN OPORTO ATTENDED BY INFORMATION MINISTER JESUINHO, COL EURICO CORVACHO, OPORTO REGION CHIEF OF STAFF (AND AFM LEADER) MADE PUBLIC ALLEGED DETAILS OF THE PORTUGUESE LIBERATION ARMY (EXERCITO DE LIBERTACAO PORTUGUES - ELP).

2. CORVACHO SPOKE AND ANSWERED QUESTIONS FOR ALMOST TWO HOURS. BEFORE REPRESENTATIVES OF PORTUGUESE AND INTERNATIONAL PRESS. HE SAID ELP WAS COUNTER REVOLUTIONARY CONSPIRACY BASED PRIMARILY IN NORTHERN PORTUGAL WITH HEADQUARTERS IN MADRID. SHOWING DOCUMENTS AND PHOTOS TO PRESS, CORVACHO EXPLAINED THAT ELP WAS STARTED IN EARLY JANUARY, ORGANIZED IN SEVEN PERSON CELLS, AND HAD PLANS FOR TWO CLANDESTINE RADIO TRANSMITTERS TO BROADCAST TO PORTUGAL.

3. CORVACHO CLAIMED A "FOREIGNER NAMED MORGAN" WAS CONNECTED
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WITH ELP AND THAT MORGAN HAD EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN LATIN

AMERICA. HE SHOWED PHOTO OF MORGAN AND ANOTHER FOREIGNER DINING WITH TEN ELP MEMBERS IN SALAMANCA, SPAIN. PICTURE WAS NOT CLEAR ON TV. NO ONE IN PHOTO WAS RECOGNIZABLE AS EMBOFF JOHN MORGAN (WHO HAS NEVER RPT NEVER BEEN IN SALAMANCA OR IN SPAIN SINCE DECEMBER 1973).

4. QUESTIONED SEVERAL TIMES ON POSSIBLE CIA LINKS TO ELP, CORVACHO SAID THEY HAD NO DOCUMENTATION OF SUCH LINKS. RESPONDING TO A QUESTION ON WHETHER ELP HAD FOREIGN CONNECTIONS, CARVACHO SAID "PROGRESSIVE PRESS" COULD DRAW OWN CONCLUSIONS FROM NATIONALITY OF FOREIGNERS IN SALAMANCA PHOTO.

5. CORVACHO SAID HE COULD NOT SAY FOR NOW WHETHER ELP WAS LINKED TO CDS. HE SAID ELP MAY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN MARCH 11 COUP ATTEMPT.

6. DISCLAIMING ANY INTENTION OF GOP TO SET UP A POLITICAL POLICE, CORVACHO SAID THAT PORTUGAL NEEDED AN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE OF THE TYPE ARMY HAS ALWAYS HAD. HE ADDED THAT ASSISTANCE OF "POPULAR FORCES" IN ALERTING GOP TO COUNTER REVOLUTIONARY THREATS WAS ESSENTIAL. HE USED EXAMPLE OF POPULAR FORCES IN CUBA DEFEATING AMERICAN ACTIONS.

7. ONLY PREVIOUS REFERENCE TO ELP IN MEDIA HERE WAS ONE SENTENCE REFERENCE TO POSSIBLE ELP INVOLVEMENT IN MARCH 11 COUP ATTEMPT MADE BY CPT SALGUEIRO MAIO OF SANTAREM CAVALRY SCHOOL WHEN DESCRIBING IN MARCH 14 PRESS INTERVIEW HIS UNIT'S ACTIONS ON MARCH 11.

8. COMMENT: ELP REVELATIONS MAY BE ATTEMPT BY GOP TO START BACKFIRE AGAINST DEVELOPING CRITICISM FROM WEST AS RESULT OF NATIONALIZATIONS, BANNING OF PDC, AND IMPENDING SHIFT TO LEFT IN CABINET COMPOSITION. GOP MAY ALSO WISH TO DIVERT ATTENTION OF PORTUGUESE PUBLIC FROM LEFT'S GREAT LEAP FORWARD.

9. TENOR OF QUESTIONS DURING PRESS CONFERENCE AND RADIO COMMENTARY AFTERWARDS LEFT LITTLE DOUBT THAT U.S. COMPLICITY WILL BE TREATED AS FACT BY LEFTIST MEDIA.
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